

record the  
bash.

up from the gutter!  
look at us!  
it's a joke.

I smile  
for when a man has been poor  
all his life  
he never forgets about  
that.

at least in America they  
have kept it sensible and  
underground:  
I can come back and  
hide.

I've read all the damned books  
and now I'm a writer  
drink in hand  
crossing the long Atlantic  
with Sherwood, Ernie, Ezra and  
Linda Lee.

#### HOLLYWOOD RANCH MARKET

she was 32 years younger  
than I  
with a body built for the  
gods  
and it was 4:30 a.m.  
we'd lived together for  
8 months  
and she shook me,  
"Hank?"  
"yeah?"  
"I have to have some chicken  
gizzards!"  
"what? again?"  
"I've got to have them!"  
"all right."

we got up and dressed.  
outside it was  
raining.



we drove to the Hollywood  
Ranch Market.  
she ordered her  
chicken gizzards  
and I ordered an ear of corn  
and a roast beef  
sandwich.

it was beginning to rain  
and as we waited  
a man without legs  
rolled up on a platform.  
he had a very dramatic face  
with a large nose.  
he grabbed my woman around  
the calf of one of her  
legs

with a hand the size of a  
table radio:

"HEY, CLEO, BABY! HOW YA  
DOIN'?"

"BEEFO!" she answered back,  
"YOU SON OF A BITCH, HOW YA  
DOING?"

"GREAT, BABY, GREAT! GOT A  
LIGHT?"

Beefo had a king-size in his  
mouth.

she bent over and lit him  
up and one of her breasts almost  
slipped out.

"YOU'RE LOOKING GREAT, BABY,  
GREAT! WHO'S THE GUY? THAT YOUR  
OLD MAN? HEY, MAN, HOW YA DOIN'?"

I bent over to shake and  
my hand vanished into his  
which seemed filled with  
cold cream and desert  
sands.

Beefo rolled off into the  
rain and she said,  
"I want to run down and see  
Billyjohn, Billyjohn's got one  
eye and he's the neatest guy  
you ever met! be right back!"

I paid for the orders  
and stood there holding the  
bags for 5 or 6 minutes.  
then Cleo came back,  
"Billyjohn's not there, I  
can't understand what happened  
to Billyjohn ...."



back in bed we sat upright  
eating. I finished my corn  
and my sandwich. she put her  
gizzards down.  
"they just don't taste right,  
they just don't taste like they  
used to."  
she stretched out.  
then her mouth opened  
covered with brown lipstick  
and bits of chicken  
gizzard. she began to  
snore.

I sat and listened to the rain  
then I switched out the  
light.

I had to get out of east Hollywood.  
they didn't even bother to  
fix the streets  
anymore.

#### EDITH SENT US

you just get in from the track  
after losing  
and taking the wrong freeway  
lost in the dark  
the workers roaring around you  
eager to get to their tv sets.  
you feel very subnormal,  
idiotic.  
splendid people don't get lost on  
freeways.  
you finally get off 91  
onto 7  
into 405  
into the Harbor freeway  
into the Hollywood freeway,  
off at Silverlake for your 3 bottles of  
wine.  
then down Hollywood Blvd.  
to the side street and on in.  
a book of poems in the mail.  
you read 5 or 6 poems in the bathtub  
then hurl the book from the tub to the wastebasket  
get out, towel, then into the yellow robe